



SC Department of Employment and Workforce

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Adrienne Fairwell

(803) 737-2645

afairwell@dew.sc.gov

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South Carolina's Employment Situation March 2012

Unemployment Rate Below 9.0 Percent for the First Time in More Than Three Years

The state's unemployment rate dropped to 8.9 percent in March, down from 9.1 percent in February. This is the eighth consecutive month the rate has declined and is the first time in more than three years that the rate has been below 9.0 percent.

Employment continues to rise to a level not seen since the end of 2008. Employment for March was 1,964,617, and the number of unemployed persons declined 4,345 to 193,024. The total labor force for March was estimated at 2,157,641. Nationally, the unemployment rate fell slightly from 8.3 percent in February to 8.2 percent in March.

When compared to March 2011, employment has improved (+32,871), while the level of the unemployed in the state has declined (-30,950).

South Carolina's non-farm employment saw an increase of 17,100 jobs over the month with notable gains in most major sectors. The arrival of spring brought an uptick in Leisure and Hospitality (+8,400), which was concentrated in the Food Services and Drinking subsector. Trade, Transportation and Utilities was up by 3,800, mostly in the Retail Trade subsector. Increases in Professional and Business Services (+2,600), Government (+1,400, mostly in Local Government), Manufacturing (+600), and Construction (+200) were responsible for the gains. Education and Health Services declined by 900 with most of the downward movement in Health Care and Social Assistance.

The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine® data series reported that the number of online job ads in South Carolina increased by about 1,600 (to 52,500) from February to March. The number of jobseekers per opening fell from 3.9 to 3.7 this past month. The number of online job ads in the U.S. saw a significant increase (+246,300).

The Trident Workforce Area (Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties) had the most ads (12,935), with the Midlands Workforce Area (Fairfield, Lexington, and Richland counties) coming in next (11,154). Of all online ads, Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations had the highest number in the state (10,174).

“We are pleased with the unemployment rate’s continued decline. Our state hasn’t experienced an unemployment rate less than 9 percent since 2008, and we are excited that this means unemployed South Carolinians are finding jobs.” said SC Department of Employment and Workforce Executive Director Abraham J. Turner. “There is still much work to be done in our great state, but today’s drop indicates that businesses in South Carolina along with the Department of Employment and Workforce are keenly focused on putting South Carolinians to work.”

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NONFARM EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

**Statewide
March 2012**

Jobs by Industry	March 2012	February 2012	March 2011	February 2012 to March 2012		March 2011 to March 2012	
				#	%	#	%
				Change	Change	Change	Change
Total Nonfarm Employment	1,845,100	1,828,000	1,819,100	17,100	0.94%	26,000	1.43%
Natural Resources and Mining	3,800	3,800	4,000	0	0.00%	-200	-5.00%
Construction	74,300	74,100	76,700	200	0.27%	-2,400	-3.13%
Manufacturing	221,500	220,900	213,500	600	0.27%	8,000	3.75%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	351,400	347,600	345,000	3,800	1.09%	6,400	1.86%
Information	26,700	26,800	25,900	-100	-0.37%	800	3.09%
Financial Activities	94,900	93,900	95,100	1,000	1.06%	-200	-0.21%
Professional and Business Services	230,100	227,500	225,100	2,600	1.14%	5,000	2.22%
Education and Health Services	219,100	220,000	216,700	-900	-0.41%	2,400	1.11%
Leisure and Hospitality	207,700	199,300	203,700	8,400	4.21%	4,000	1.96%
Government	346,300	344,900	344,800	1,400	0.41%	1,500	0.44%

Note: Not Seasonally Adjusted

NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

**South Carolina & Metropolitan Areas (Not Seasonally Adjusted)
March 2012**

INDUSTRY TITLE	March 2012	February 2012	March 2011	February 2012 to March 2012		March 2011 to March 2012	
				#	%	#	%
				Change	Change	Change	Change
Statewide	1,845,100	1,828,000	1,819,100	17,100	0.94%	26,000	1.43%
Anderson MSA	57,500	56,900	59,700	600	1.05%	-2,200	-3.69%
Charleston/North Charleston MSA	298,000	295,400	291,600	2,600	0.88%	6,400	2.19%
Columbia MSA	350,600	349,200	344,600	1,400	0.40%	6,000	1.74%
Florence MSA	83,600	82,800	80,800	800	0.97%	2,800	3.47%
Greenville MSA	304,700	303,800	302,000	900	0.30%	2,700	0.89%
Myrtle Beach/Conway/N. Myrtle Beach MSA	113,000	107,700	107,100	5,300	4.92%	5,900	5.51%
Spartanburg MSA	119,800	117,600	115,900	2,200	1.87%	3,900	3.36%
Sumter MSA	37,200	36,800	36,900	400	1.09%	300	0.81%

Note: Employment estimates have been rounded to the nearest hundred. Sum of detail may not equal totals due to rounding or the exclusion of certain industries from publication. All data are subject to revision.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
LOCAL AREA UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS BY COUNTY, MSA, AND STATE
(NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)

AREA		March 2012				February 2012				March 2011			
		LABOR FORCE	EMPLOY- MENT	UNEMPLOYMENT		LABOR FORCE	EMPLOY- MENT	UNEMPLOYMENT		LABOR FORCE	EMPLOY- MENT	UNEMPLOYMENT	
				LEVEL	RATE (%)			LEVEL	RATE (%)			LEVEL	RATE (%)
Marion County	↓	11,969	9,884	2,085	17.4	12,067	9,760	2,307	19.1	12,080	9,680	2,400	19.9
Marlboro County	↓	11,595	9,718	1,877	16.2	11,740	9,681	2,059	17.5	11,668	9,583	2,085	17.9
Allendale County	↓	3,309	2,781	528	16.0	3,343	2,749	594	17.8	3,375	2,838	537	15.9
Barnwell County	↓	8,394	7,208	1,186	14.1	8,483	7,181	1,302	15.3	8,517	7,276	1,241	14.6
Chester County	↓	14,435	12,472	1,963	13.6	14,556	12,443	2,113	14.5	14,915	12,444	2,471	16.6
Union County	↓	11,342	9,796	1,546	13.6	11,437	9,742	1,695	14.8	11,660	9,840	1,820	15.6
Bamberg County	↓	6,132	5,304	828	13.5	6,172	5,275	897	14.5	6,264	5,416	848	13.5
Dillon County	↓	13,188	11,408	1,780	13.5	13,273	11,327	1,946	14.7	13,279	11,276	2,003	15.1
Clarendon County	↓	12,387	10,770	1,617	13.1	12,445	10,675	1,770	14.2	12,487	10,631	1,856	14.9
McCormick County	↓	3,329	2,903	426	12.8	3,361	2,893	468	13.9	3,432	2,930	502	14.6
Fairfield County	↓	10,862	9,532	1,330	12.2	11,025	9,550	1,475	13.4	10,605	9,368	1,237	11.7
Orangeburg County	↓	40,596	35,642	4,954	12.2	40,970	35,509	5,461	13.3	41,408	36,028	5,380	13.0
Williamsburg County	↓	16,152	14,223	1,929	11.9	16,229	14,085	2,144	13.2	15,906	13,858	2,048	12.9
Chesterfield County	↓	18,737	16,530	2,207	11.8	18,866	16,446	2,420	12.8	18,859	16,339	2,520	13.4
Hampton County	↓	7,711	6,801	910	11.8	7,754	6,753	1,001	12.9	7,779	6,733	1,046	13.4
Lancaster County	↓	30,473	26,930	3,543	11.6	30,774	26,894	3,880	12.6	31,235	26,913	4,322	13.8
Lee County	↓	8,202	7,251	951	11.6	8,210	7,184	1,026	12.5	8,131	7,097	1,034	12.7
Cherokee County	↓	24,664	21,817	2,847	11.5	24,889	21,757	3,132	12.6	24,983	21,754	3,229	12.9
Colleton County	↓	17,085	15,185	1,900	11.1	17,155	15,102	2,053	12.0	16,935	14,755	2,180	12.9
York County	↓	111,217	99,224	11,993	10.8	112,201	99,241	12,960	11.6	115,065	98,408	16,657	14.5
Horry County	↓	126,474	113,411	13,063	10.3	124,297	109,020	15,277	12.3	123,149	107,810	15,339	12.5
Greenwood County	↓	30,506	27,523	2,983	9.8	30,773	27,501	3,272	10.6	31,009	27,651	3,358	10.8
Sumter County	↓	44,665	40,309	4,356	9.8	44,837	40,068	4,769	10.6	44,808	39,919	4,889	10.9
Florence County	↓	63,201	57,116	6,085	9.6	63,203	56,767	6,436	10.2	61,854	54,978	6,876	11.1
Abbeville County	↓	10,595	9,585	1,010	9.5	10,680	9,555	1,125	10.5	11,109	9,822	1,287	11.6
Georgetown County	↓	29,723	26,890	2,833	9.5	29,754	26,581	3,173	10.7	29,450	26,089	3,361	11.4
Darlington County	↓	30,537	27,670	2,867	9.4	30,881	27,501	3,380	10.9	30,033	26,635	3,398	11.3
Calhoun County	↓	6,671	6,059	612	9.2	6,774	6,070	704	10.4	6,633	5,954	679	10.2
Edgefield County	↓	11,048	10,072	976	8.8	11,162	10,066	1,096	9.8	11,308	10,320	988	8.7
Laurens County	↓	30,612	27,909	2,703	8.8	30,932	27,998	2,934	9.5	30,789	27,666	3,123	10.1
Spartanburg County	↓	133,428	121,881	11,547	8.7	133,464	120,858	12,606	9.4	131,598	118,370	13,228	10.1
Jasper County	↓	10,449	9,557	892	8.5	10,441	9,547	894	8.6	10,023	9,046	977	9.7
Anderson County	↓	81,521	74,638	6,883	8.4	82,556	74,489	8,067	9.8	84,293	76,269	8,024	9.5
Oconee County	↓	30,828	28,243	2,585	8.4	31,116	28,193	2,923	9.4	31,363	28,222	3,141	10.0
Newberry County	↓	18,212	16,709	1,503	8.3	18,319	16,648	1,671	9.1	18,608	16,829	1,779	9.6
Aiken County	↓	74,460	68,499	5,961	8.0	75,157	68,465	6,692	8.9	76,764	70,188	6,576	8.6
Richland County	↓	180,853	166,831	14,022	7.8	182,252	167,140	15,112	8.3	179,762	163,961	15,801	8.8
Berkeley County	↓	84,114	77,614	6,500	7.7	84,559	77,429	7,130	8.4	83,222	75,965	7,257	8.7
Kershaw County	↓	29,377	27,146	2,231	7.6	29,687	27,196	2,491	8.4	29,243	26,679	2,564	8.8
Pickens County	↓	57,809	53,455	4,354	7.5	58,662	53,624	5,038	8.6	57,774	52,988	4,786	8.3
Saluda County	↓	9,014	8,350	664	7.4	9,105	8,366	739	8.1	8,968	8,207	761	8.5
Beaufort County	↓	63,861	59,357	4,504	7.1	64,398	59,293	5,105	7.9	61,462	56,179	5,283	8.6
Dorchester County	↓	68,224	63,461	4,763	7.0	68,530	63,310	5,220	7.6	67,438	62,113	5,325	7.9
Charleston County	↓	175,723	163,706	12,017	6.8	176,619	163,315	13,304	7.5	174,091	160,228	13,863	8.0
Greenville County	↓	224,149	209,017	15,132	6.8	225,902	209,679	16,223	7.2	225,074	207,194	17,880	7.9
Lexington County	↓	133,153	124,150	9,003	6.8	134,195	124,380	9,815	7.3	131,966	122,015	9,951	7.5
Charleston MSA	↓	328,061	304,781	23,280	7.1	329,707	304,054	25,653	7.8	324,752	298,306	26,446	8.1
Columbia MSA	↓	369,931	342,068	27,863	7.5	373,038	342,701	30,337	8.1	367,177	336,184	30,993	8.4
Florence MSA	↓	93,738	84,786	8,952	9.6	94,084	84,268	9,816	10.4	91,887	81,613	10,274	11.2
Greenville MSA	↓	312,570	290,381	22,189	7.1	315,496	291,301	24,195	7.7	313,638	287,848	25,790	8.2
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED													
South Carolina	↓	2,157,641	1,964,617	193,024	8.9	2,158,446	1,961,077	197,369	9.1	2,155,720	1,931,746	223,974	10.4

Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Counties are sorted by current month's unemployment rate in descending order.

↑ Unemployment Rate Up
↓ Unemployment Rate Down
- Unemployment Rate =